



The Sacred Salafee Methodology

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Allaah the Glorified and Exalted states in His Noble Book:

"And most of them believe not in Allaah, except that they attribute partners to him."
[Soorah Yoosuf 12:106]

The present state of the *Ummah* therefore, is as the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) spoke about it - even before we had seen what we had seen. In fact, even our forefathers saw what they saw - the division into sects and groups and the division of the Religion - contrary to the command of the Lord of the Worlds.

"...And do not be from among the polytheists, those who have split up their Religion and become groups and sects, each group only being pleased with that which is with it."
[Sooratur-Room 30:31-32]

And in contradiction to Allaah's command in another statement:

"And verily, this is My Straight Path, so follow it and do not follow other paths, for they would separate you away from His Path." [Sooratul-An'aam 6:153]

In addition, the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) has made it clear what is meant by these 'other paths' in an authentic *hadeeth*¹ which depicts the division of the Muslims and the straying of a large number of them from the straight path.

'Abdullaah Ibn Mas'ood² (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) said: "One day the Messenger of Allaah drew for us a straight line on the ground and said: 'This is the path of Allaah.' Then he drew a

¹ An authentic (*saheeh*) hadeeth is one in which the following conditions have been met: (1) There must be an unbroken chain of narrators leading back to the Prophet Muhammad (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*). (2) Each individual in the chain must be recognized as being a mature, trustworthy Muslim of sound mind and character. (3) Each of the narrators must be recognized as being perfectly accurate in his transmission of *hadeeths*. (4) The *hadeeth* must not contain something which contradicts something reported by someone who is more trustworthy. (5) There must not be anything in the *hadeeth* which may cause suspicion about its authenticity.

² Aboo 'Abdur Rahmaan 'Abdullaah Ibn Mas'ood, was among the pioneers of Islaam and among the major companions of Prophet Muhammad (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) in both knowledge and stature. He made the *hijrah* to both Habashah and Madeenah and witnessed with the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa*

number of other lines on the right and the left of the straight line, and said: 'These are pathways, on the head of each path is a *shaytaan* calling people to it (himself).' Then he recited:

“And verily this is My Path so follow it.”³

Indeed the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) has explained in this *hadeeth*, that the path leading to Allaah is a single path. It is not as some of the Soofees say or claim, that the paths to Allaah are as numerous as breaths of the creatures, at least this is what they used to say long ago. Today however, the paths have changed to the emergence of groups and parties. Each of these groups being pleased only with that which is with them. This is so, even though all o the Muslims are aware of Allaah's command:

"And do not be from among the Polytheists, those who split their religion and became sects, each sect rejoicing in that which is with it." [Sooratur Room 30:31-32]

And they are aware of the words of the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*):

"The Jews have split and split and divided into seventy-one sects and the Christians have split and divided into seventy-two sects and my *Ummah* would split into seventy-three sects. All of these sects will be in the Fire except one." They said, "And which one is this o Messenger of Allaah?" He said:

"The *Jamaa'ah*."⁴

This is the most popular narration of this *hadeeth*, and it is an authentic narration. In another narrations which explains this one, the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), when asked about the group that would be saved, said:

"The one that adheres to what I and my Companions adhere to."⁵

The Words of the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) in this second narration, which is graded as '*hasan*',⁶ as I have explained in some of my books,

sallam), the battles of *Badr*, '*Uhud*, and *al-Khandaq*. He was also present at the Pledge of Allegiance at *Ridwaan*, among other great events. He was also one of the legal experts among the Companions. He died in the year 23H.

³ Ahmad (1/435, 465), an-Nisaa'ee (no. 184), ad-Daarimee (1/67-68). It was authenticated by Shaykh al-Albaanee in *Sharhul-'Aqeedatit-Tahaawiyyah* (no. 810).

⁴ Related by at-Tirmidhee (no. 2641). It was authenticated by Shaykh al-Albaanee in *Silsilatul-Ahaadeethus-Saheehah* (no. 1348).

⁵ Related by al-Haythamee in *Majma'uz-Zawaa'id* (1/189). It was authenticated by Shaykh al-Albaanee in *Saheehul-Jaami'* (52/9).

⁶ A *hadeeth* that is graded *hasan* is one in which the conditions of a *saheeh hadeeth* have been met, except that one of the narrators in the chain of narrators has not attained the level of perfect accuracy as the other narrators have. Thus, the *hadeeth* is demoted from the level of *saheeh* to that of *hasan*.

"What I and my Companions are adhering to."

Defines the path which the group that would be saved from the Fire must follow. This is the group which takes its methodology from that of the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) and his Companions.

A point must be made here relating to the words of the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*),

"...and my Companions."

It is clear that, had the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) limited himself to saying:

"What I am adhering to."

It would have been sufficient as an answer. Due to great wisdom, however he went further and added:

"...and my Companions."

The wisdom behind this is that the Companions of the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) were all upon true guidance from their Lord. They learnt from the Revelation which was sent down upon the heart of their Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), fresh and pure, just as it was revealed, and before its meanings were corrupted by foreign elements and vain desires which captured the hearts of some of those who came after them. This corruption is evident in the emergence of views and thoughts contradictory to that of the Companions of the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*). This is why he mentioned the Companions and mentioned them along with what he was upon; for he knew that they would be true followers of him.

In addition, the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) has spoken in glowing terms about the generations immediately following his Companions. He said in an authentic *hadeeth*, rather a *Mutawaatir hadeeth*⁷ in my view and as far as I know, resulting from my research and study of it:

"The best of people are those of my generation..."

Some people, when mentioning this *hadeeth*, say:

⁷ A *hadeeth* is considered to be *mutawaatir* when it has been narrated by such a large number of narrators, in each level of the chain of narrators, that common sense can tell that it was impossible for these individuals to have agreed upon the fabrication of a *hadeeth*.

"The best generation is my generation."

I see it necessary to mention here - and indeed reminders benefit the believers - that the correct wording of the *hadeeth* is:

"The best people..."

"The best people are those of my generation, followed by those who came after them, followed by those who came after them."⁸

These three generations therefore, they are the ones about whom the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) attested to their benevolence. They too, are the ones referred to in the *Qur'aanic* verse:

"And whosoever contradicts the Messenger, after receiving guidance, and follows other than the path of the Believers, we will leave him in the path which he has chosen and cast him into Hell - what an evil destination." [Sooratun-Nisaa' 4:115]

It was from the Words of Allaah:

"And follow other than the path of the Believers."

That the Prophet took his words in the previous *hadeeth*:

"...and my Companions."

The vocal point of the *Qur'aanic* verse is the same of that of the *hadeeth*. This too, provides clear proof that it is not permissible for any Muslim, in these later years, whosoever may be, to contradict or take other than the path of the Believers - because they were on upon clear guidance from their Lord. For this reason also, the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) mentioned some of his Companions as being of a higher calibre than others, referring to the Rightly-Guided Caliphs, as has been narrated in the *hadeeth* narrated 'Irbaadh Ibn Saariyah (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*)⁹ who said:

The Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said:

⁸ Related by al-Bukhaaree (no. 2562)

⁹ 'Irbaadh Ibn Saariyah as-Sulamee, Aboo Najeeh, a famous Companion of the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) from amongst the poor called *Ahlus-Suffah*. These were those poor Muslims who made the *hijrah* from Makkah to Madeenah. As they had no house of their own, they took up lodging at a sheltered portion of the Prophet's Mosque. He was among those Companions about whom Allaah sent down the following *aayah*:

"Nor (is there any blame) who came to you to be provided with mounts and when you said: 'I can find no mounts for you.' They turned back with their eyes overflowing with tears of grief, because they could not find anything to spend (for *Jihaad*)" [Sooratut-Tawbah 9:92]

He reported a number of *hadeeths* from the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), which are to be found in the more popular books of *Hadeeth* literature.

"I advise you all to fear Allaah and to listen to and obey (your leaders), even if he may be a slave from Habashah; For indeed, whoever from you is alive after I am gone will see many disputes and contradictions. You must therefore, stick to my *Sunnah* and the *Sunnah* of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs. Stick to it firmly and beware of innovations, for all new inventions are *Bid'ah* and all *Bid'ah* is a straying from the Right Path."¹⁰

This is how the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) mentioned in collaboration with his *Sunnah*,¹¹ the *Sunnah* of the Rightly-Guided Caliphs. This is because of the same point, which we mentioned previously in the *Qur'aanic* verse and in the *hadeeth* about the Saved Group.

From these three texts therefore, a system can be drawn. A system to which all Muslims in these times must adhere, and from which they must not be aloof, as we notice with so many of our contemporaries in the field of *da'wah* to the *Qur'aan* and the *Sunnah*. They differ with us regarding our method of referring to the understanding of the *Salaf* from amongst the Companions, the *taabi'een*¹² and those who adhere to their principles in order for us to understand the *Qur'aan* and the *Sunnah*. This in fact, is what must be adopted by each Muslim as his method, in order that he does not stray from the path of the Believers. It is not sufficient therefore, to say today, 'We are upon the *Qur'aan* and the *Sunnah*.'

Returning to the understanding of the venerable *Salaf*, however, is a guarantee and safeguard for the Muslims of today, against falling into what some of those who came after the *Salaf* fell into. These Muslims have differed severely, because they did not have easy access to the texts of the *Sunnah*, which is the explanation of the *Qur'aan* as the Lord of the Worlds says:

"And We have sent down to you the remembrance (*dhikr*), so that you may explain to the people what has been sent down to them." [Sooratun-Nahl 16:44]

This is the major reason for the differences amongst those who preceded, even among some of the diligent leaders from amongst the scholars, ascetics and pious Muslims. But there are other reasons for these differences. The main reason is the dominance of personal desires and views of some people even though they may have had some knowledge, even some piety and devotion.

We say therefore, that there is no guarantee for the Muslims against falling into contradictions of the *Qur'aan* and the *Sunnah*, except to return to the methodology of the venerable *Salaf*. We sincerely believe that among the reasons for the present state of the

¹⁰ Related by Aboo Daawood (no. 4607) and by at-Tirmidhee (no. 2676). It was authenticated by Shaykh al-Albaanee in *Irwaa'ul-Ghaleel* (no. 2455).

¹¹ The *Sunnah* involves the speech, actions and tacit approvals of the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*).

¹² Those Muslims meeting the Companions of the Messenger of Allaah, but not meeting the Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) himself.

Muslims is their differences in the interpretation of the texts from the *Qur'aan* and the *Sunnah*, due to their dependence upon other than what we call the *Salafee* method.

This is what we must know of the present state of the Muslims, in order to secure a return to what the *Salaf* of the Muslims were upon, which we see as vital for Allaah made them strong and gave them dominance in the land, as is known in the glorious history of Islaam. This is what comes to mind presently, concerning that part of the question, that is 'the present state of the Muslim *Ummah*..' Before I proceed to speak about the reasons for the weakness of the Muslim *Ummah*, I would like to hear from you all, or at least from some of you, that I may be satisfied...are my words and my voice coming through clearly, by the Will of Allaah, that I may follow up my speech and my answer?

"Very clearly of Shaykh of ours!"

"May Allaah grant you glad tidings..."

I now continue by the Will of Allaah.

THE REASONS FOR THE WEAKNESS OF THE MUSLIM UMMAH

The scholars have listed many reasons for the weakness of the Muslim *Ummah*. They are all aware however, or at least some of them are aware, that the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) compiled these reasons in one sentence, in an authentic *hadeeth* when he (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said:

"The nations will soon gather up and call upon each other to gather up against you just as the diners call upon each other to the dining plate."

Someone asked: 'Is it because of our little numbers at that time?'

The Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said:

"Certainly not, in fact, you would be numerous, but you would be like the foam of the ocean. And certainly Allaah would remove the fear of you from the hearts of your enemies, and He would certainly cast weakness into your hearts."

Someone asked: 'What is this weakness?'

He (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) replied:

"Love for the worldly life and hatred for death."¹³

¹³ Related by Aboo Daawood (no. 4297) and in *al-Mishkaat* (3/1475). It was authenticated by Shaykh al-Albaanee in *Silsilatul-Ahaadeethus-Saheehah* (no. 957) and in *Saheehul-Jaami'* (no. 8183).

Indeed the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) was correct, because every Muslim in his right mind can see that the love of this world is the root of all evil and it is the reason behind all wrongdoings and calamities. Why not? When it is that this drives man to be miserly and covetous with regards to wealth and person, with which we strive in the Path of Allaah - by spending the wealth that is dear to us and by sacrificing our person which is even dearer than the wealth. This is why the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said:

"...Beware of covetousness, for indeed covetousness destroyed those before you by causing them to spill the blood of each other and to make unlawful things lawful."¹⁴

As has been mentioned in many of the books of the *Sunnah*, among them *Saheeh Muslim*.

I must take this opportunity here to mention, that the making of unlawful things lawful is of two natures. The first is the indulgence in unlawful acts whilst being fully aware of their unlawfulness. This is visibly present among the Muslims today in all of its forms and types. Even the greatest of all sins, *Shirk* (the association of partners with Allaah and the worship of others besides Allaah) is clearly apparent in some societies and in some personalities who call upon other than Allaah in times of distress, seek other than the relief of Allaah from hardships and sacrifice to other than Allaah. There are even others who swear by other than Allaah. All of these things are considered *Shirk* and they are forms of *Shirk* which are widespread today amongst the Muslims. Most people however, and I would not say most of the common folk, but most of the learned, are not concentrating upon warning the people from these forms of *Shirk* and idolatry. These are the greatest of all sins, as has been mentioned in an authentic *hadeeth*, which states that among the greatest of sins are *Shirk*, murder, being unkind to parents and interest (*riba*).¹⁵ And if you only knew *riba*, since it has become so widespread today due to the establishment of what are known today as "*Banks*".

In addition, among the major sins is the drinking of alcohol, the women displaying themselves, the building of mosques on gravesites and many, many more.

The second category of unlawful acts is of two further types:

That is which one indulges without knowing its ruling or that it is unlawful. This, without a doubt, is an evil which is widespread amongst many Muslims.

¹⁴ Related by Muslim (8/18)

¹⁵ The text of the *hadeeth* is reported by al-Bukhaaree (8/7), Muslim (1/64) and by al-Haythamee in *Majma'uz-Zawaa'id* (4/130) and it is as follows: From Abee Hurayrah who said that the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said: "Avoid the seven great destructive sins." The people inquired: 'O Messenger of Allaah! What are they?' He said: "To join others in worship along with Allaah (*shirk*), sorcery, killing a person whose killing Allaah has prohibited, except in legal judgement, the indulgence in interest (*riba*), the unjust utilization of the wealth of the orphan, fleeing from the enemy at the time of fighting, falsely accusing chaste women of illegal sexual intercourse."

That in which one indulges by devising tricks to make unlawful acts lawful, just as the Jews fraudulently caught the fish, as has been mentioned in the *Qur'aan* - as is well-known to all - and just as their trickery in making use of fat was prohibited for them, we gather from the words of the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) in an authentic *hadeeth*:

"Allaah has cursed the Jews, for the fat (of animals) was made unlawful for them, yet they melted it. Sold it and benefited from its receipts. And indeed if Allaah makes the eating of anything unlawful for a people, he also makes unlawful the receipts from its sale."¹⁶

This *hadeeth*, in spite of it being from amongst the very important *hadeeths*, is among the *hadeeths* that is rarely heard upon the tongues of those giving sermons and admonitions. It is a *hadeeth* that would save the Muslims from following into what the Jews before fell into. In addition, the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) warned against falling into what the Jews fell into, in an authentic *hadeeth* reported by al-Bukhaaree among others, in his book of authentic *hadeeths* from the *hadeeth* narrated by Aboo Sa'eed al-Khudree (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*)¹⁷ who said: "The Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said:

"You would most certainly follow the ways of those who preceded you so completely and so literally, that even if they enter the hole of a *Dabb* (mastigure or lizard), you too would enter into it behind them."

We said: 'O Messenger of Allaah, the Jews and the Christians?'

He said:

"Whom else?"¹⁸

Thus I say as a warning, that this type of indulgence in unlawful acts through the slightest means of trickery, has happened to the Muslims in some of their transactions and contracts. One of the most common of these practices is what is known as the marriage of legitimacy (*nikaahut-tahleel*). The doer of which is cursed in the authentic *Sunnah* by the statement of the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*):

"Allaah has cursed the legitimizer and the one for whom the woman was legitimized."¹⁹

¹⁶ Related by al-Bukhaaree, Muslim and Aboo Daawood. It was authenticated by Shaykh al-Albaanee in *Saheehul-Jaami'* (no. 5107)

¹⁷ He is Aboo Sa'eed Sa'd Ibn Maalik, he was from the tribe of al-Khazraj of Madeenah. He was too young to take part in the battle of 'Uhud, in which his father was martyred. He went on however, to participate in the battles which followed 'Uhud. He reported quite a number of *hadeeths* from the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*). He reputed to be the most knowledgeable Companion about the affairs of the other Companions of the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*).

¹⁸ Related by al-Bukhaaree (9/422)

¹⁹ Related by Aboo Daawood (2/555). It was authenticated by Shaykh al-Albaanee in *Saheehul-Jaami'* (no. 5101)

Even with this being the case, there are still from *experts* in *fiqh* (Islaamic jurisprudence) who permit this marriage of legitimacy, even though the Prophet (ﷺ) has cursed those who indulge in it as you have just heard.

Among the things which are also widespread today, is the selling of goods on installments at an increase upon the cash price (i.e. a higher purchase). Among them also is the dealing in *'eenah* transactions²⁰ which is widespread in some Islaamic countries, I am sorry to say. The time however, does not permit for me to expound on all these points mentioned here. I just wanted to remind the brothers of a *hadeeth* that is appropriate for this occasion. This is the statement of the Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ):

"If you indulge in *'eenah* transactions when trading and you start to hold on to the tails of cattle and you are satisfied to concentrate only upon farming and you have abandoned *Jihaad* in the Cause of Allaah, Allaah will cast a humiliation upon you which would never be lifted from you until you return to your Religion."²¹

In this *Hadeeth* therefore, there is an extremely clear picture of the poisons and the ills which will result from the love of this world and that it is the rat-race and the concentration upon taking all necessary steps to accumulate wealth, that has resulted in what is now the present state of the Muslims. The Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) mentioned the abandonment of *Jihaad* with the evil of *'eenah* transactions, the holding fast to the tails of cattle and the contraction only upon farming. This abandonment of *Jihaad* has now become a commonplace today, encompassing all Arab and Muslim countries without exception. This is so, despite their having in their possession the means to wage *Jihaad*, which may not be available to the eager Muslim youths in order that they may defend their countries, their lands, even their honour and dignity.

The only natural result - the *Sunnah* of Allaah - and you will find no replacement for the *Sunnah* of Allaah, due to their falling into all sorts of contradictions and their making lawful what Allaah has made unlawful. So it is for Allaah to cast a great humiliation and degradation upon them.

This humiliation which we see has taken control of all the Muslim countries. Even if they seem free upon the surface, in fact they cannot move or act as the Book of their Lord and the *Sunnah* of their Prophet (ﷺ) direct them to. For example, it has been mentioned in an authentic *hadeeth*:

"Fight the polytheists (*mushrikeen*) with your wealth, tongues and persons."²²

²⁰ This term is explained later on by the Shaykh (*hafidhahullaah*).

²¹ Related by Aboo Daawood (no. 3462), it was authenticated by the shaykh (*hafidhahullaah*) in *as-Saheehah* (no. 11).

²² Related by Aboo Daawood (2/695) and authenticated by Shaykh al-Albaanee in *al-Mishkaat* (no. 3821) and in *Saheehul-Jaami'* (3090).

We have now discarded *Jihaad* with our persons and resorted only to *Jihaad* with our wealth due to its prevalence amongst us and to *Jihaad* with our tongues due to the ease of doing so. As for *Jihaad* with our persons, this has become - unfortunately - among the has beens. This is why the Prophet (ﷺ) in this authentic *hadeeth* described both the ills and the cure for these illnesses. For he mentioned some examples of the ills which would befall the Muslims at the beginning of the *hadeeth*, then at the end he gave the cure. He said:

"He would not remove it from you until you return to your Religion."

This cure is the only remedy for the Muslims if they want to retrieve their strength, pride and honour and if they want Allaah to make them superior in the land, just as He made those before them superior in the land. This is why the Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) said:

"Give glad tidings to this *Ummah*, that it would rise up and attain dominance in the land. Whoever therefore, does an act for the Hereafter for worldly benefit, he has no portion in the Hereafter."²³

The words of the Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ):

"...until you return to your Religion."

Gives me the opportunity to introduce the last part of the question for this Muslim nation which has been plagued with a humiliation and degradation which has never befallen it before. Allaah the Exalted says:

"That is because Allaah will never change a grace which he has bestowed upon a people until they change what is in their own selves." [Sooratul An'aam 6:53]

What then is the reason for the changing of the blessings of strength from Allaah and the honour and superiority in the land which were bestowed upon the Muslims before?

The reason is that we have changed the blessings of Allaah. We have replaced them and have taken to worldly strives. We have also abandoned *Jihaad* in the Path of Allaah. Therefore, the logical result of all this is that if a Muslim does not help the cause of Allaah, he in return would not receive the Help of Allaah as is stated in the Words of Allaah:

"If you help Allaah, He will help you." [Soorah Muhammad 47:7]

²³ Related by al-Bayhaquee and al-Haakim said that its chain of narrators was authentic. It has been authenticated by Shaykh al-Albaanee in *Ahkaamul-Janaa'iz* (no. 52) and in *Saheehul-Jaami'* (no. 2825).

I must pause here to explain. Allaah has placed upon the tongue of his Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) that cure for this chronic disease which has befallen the Muslims in all of the Islaamic lands. That cure is to return to their Religion which is Islaam as you all know and as Allaah explains:

"...And whoever seeks a religion other than Islaam, it will never be accepted of him and in the Hereafter, he will be one of the losers." [Soorah Aali-'Imraan 3:85]

And as He mentioned in another statement:

"This day I have completed your Religion and completed my favours upon you and I have chosen for you Islaam as your Religion." [Sooratul-Maa'idah 5:3]

It pleases me here to take the opportunity to explain what the Imaam, ash-Shaatibee (*rahimahullaah*) said in his great book called *al-I'tisaam* when mentioning what Imaam Maalik²⁴ said:

"Whoever introduces an innovation into Islaam and thinks that it is good, then he has indeed claimed that Muhammad (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) was deceitful in conveying his message. Read if you like the Words of Allaah:

"This day I have completed your Religion and completed my favours upon you and I have chosen for you Islaam as your Religion." [Sooratul-Maa'idah 5:3]

The last of this *Ummah* would not be restored and put in order, except by what put the first of this *Ummah* in order. Whatever was not part of the Religion at that time cannot be part of the Religion today.²⁵

Then Imaam ash-Shaatibee said:

"We used to use this authentic narration from Imaam Maalik - the Imaam of *Daarul-Hijrah* (Madeenah) - as evidence to prove that it is not permissible for any Muslim to introduce into the Religion something new, however small or insignificant it may be, whether it be in character, worship or belief. We used to use this tradition as evidence, relying upon the Noble *Qur'aanic* statement which states that Allaah completed his favours upon us by the completion of our Religion which is al-Islaam."²⁶

²⁴ The famous Imaam to whom the Maalikee school of Islaamic law is attributed. He was renown for his knowledge and piety. He studied under more than nine-hundred scholars and did not give a single *fatwaa* (Islaamic verdict), until some seventy scholar attested to his ability to do so. He was born in the year 93H and died in the year 199H. May Allaah have mercy upon him.

²⁵ Related in *ash-Shifaa`* of Qaadee `Iyaad (2/676)

²⁶ *al-I'tisaam* (2/35)

So what about us today? We have gone so far away from Islaam - not only in those things that we call the *Sunnah*, which is contradicted by Innovation. In fact, we have drifted totally away from Islaam. We have drifted away, not only in the things which some may call 'secondary matters, not important', but we have drifted away from the Islaam which Allaah has ordained for us as our Religion. We have strayed in our legal judgements, our thoughts, even in our beliefs.

If however, we sincerely want to administer this cure that Allaah has prescribed for us upon the tongue of His Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), which is to return to the Religion, then how should we understand this Religion?

So there are two understandings known to the scholars, who are aware of the differences existing between the past and present day scholars. There are two schools of thought - one affiliated to the *Salaf* and the other affiliated to the *khalaf*. Those affiliated to the *khalaf* admit that the way of the *Salaf* is sounder and safer. They claim however, that the way of the *khalaf* is greater in knowledge and wiser. So what do you think? Shall we take our beliefs firstly from the Righteous *Salaf* or from those who admit that the way of the *Salaf* is sounder, but that their way is more knowledgeable and wiser?

Without a doubt, it is clear from the evidences we mentioned previously that it is compulsory for us in these times to align firstly our beliefs to that of the *Salafus-Saalih*. We must also return to what they were upon in legal matters and in matters of character and deportment. We must return to the *Salaf* in these matters. The *Salaf*, who did not see any other recourse in times of dispute, except to depend upon the *Qur'aan* and the *Sunnah*. Allaah states in the *Qur'aan*:

"And by your Lord! They do not truly believe, until they seek your judgement (O Muhammad) in whatever they dispute about. They do not find any reservations in their hearts about your judgement, but instead submit totally to it." [Sooratun-Nisaa' 4:65]

Today unfortunately, we have not seen those groups and parties agreeing with us in administering this cure. For there is no remedy for the Muslims to return to their pride and strength, except through their return to their Religion. This point is a point about which no one from amongst the Muslims disputes. This is so regardless of his alliances and regardless of his affiliation to a particular group, or regardless of his particular school of law. The dispute arises however, in the understanding of the Religion.

As I have mentioned before, there are two schools of thought, that of the *Salaf* and that of the *khalaf*. The *Salaf* never disputed nor disagreed about the fundamentals of the Religion. They never disputed that fact that in times of dispute, the matter is referred to the *Qur'aan* and the *Sunnah* of the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*). Therefore, they sort their judgements from these two sources and they submitted totally to these judgements as we have mentioned in the previous *Qur'aanic* verse. Differences occurred amongst them primarily due to what I have mentioned previously, which is that a *Hadeeth*

of the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) may not have reached one of them. So he may act as he sees fit based upon the knowledge that he has. Thus he may fall into unintentional error at times. This is why the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said in an authentic *hadeeth*:

"If an arbitrator gives a verdict based upon his personal reasoning (*ijtihad*) and he is correct in that verdict, then he receives two rewards. And if he makes an error then he receives only one."²⁷

Therefore it is compulsory that the Muslims return back to this principle about which there should be no difference of opinion. I mean the principle of following the *Qur'aan* and the *Sunnah* upon the understanding of the righteous predecessors.

If we agree to return to this system, and use it as our course of action and methodology and if we agree to cooperate, firstly in understanding this methodology and secondly upon the implementation of it, then there comes something of extreme importance which is the summary of the answer to the question about the path to progress.

It is compulsory upon all of the Muslims today to first have a proper understanding of their Religion, then to implement it correctly, each person according to his ability. The rulers are different from the ruled. The rulers have the highest authority, while the authority of the ruled is limited. If both the rulers and the ruled take up their responsibility therefore, firstly understanding Islaam correctly, then secondly implementing this Islaam totally - each according to his ability, as I said before - I believe that one day the Believers will rejoice due to the victory to Allaah.

I see many Islaamic *Du'aat* (callers to Islaam) who constantly call upon the governments to rule in accordance with what Allaah has sent down - and this is a genuine call without a doubt. For Allaah has said:

"And whoever does not rule by what Allaah has revealed, then these are the disbelievers."
[Sooratul-Maa'idah 5:44]

And in another statement:

"...then these are the rebellious." [Sooratul-Maa'idah 5:47]

And in yet another statement:

"...such are the oppressors." [Sooratul-Maa'idah 5:45]

It is true that the governments should rule by the implementation of Islaam and their constitutions, laws and upon their people. This is true and compulsory. However, we

²⁷ Related by al-Bukhaaree (13/318) and Muslim (no. 1716)

would like to remind those individuals who are calling to this statement, that they should not forget their own selves. As Allaah states:

"O you who believe! Take care of your own selves, no harm can come to you from those who have gone astray if you follow right guidance." [Sooratul-Maa'idah 5:105]

So it is obligatory upon every Muslim to truly understand Islaam and enjoin it to the best of his ability upon himself and upon those whom he has responsibility and authority. So the Messenger of Allaah has said:

"You are all guardians and responsible for your wards and things under your care."²⁸
The man therefore is a guardian and is responsible for his dependants. The woman is also responsible and a guardian over her dependants and so on.

Some of the *du'aat* refer to this self-training by this statement which was made by one of them: 'Establish the Islaamic state in your heart and it will be established for you upon your land.' I repeat: 'Establish the Islaamic state in your heart and it will be established for you upon your land.'

This statement pleases us much. However, we are not pleased with those who are affiliated with the one who advocated these words. This is because they do not pay much attention to it, nor do they place any importance upon its implementation. So doing that requires a great effort on their part. It requires that they return to the *Qur'aan* and the *Hadeeth* of the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) as they were understood by our righteous predecessors.

So I say that the return to the Religion - which is the remedy needed to cure what has befallen the Muslims today requires two things from us. I call them:
at-Tasfiyah (Purification) and *at-Tarbiyah*.

When I say '*tasfiyah*', I mean that it is incumbent upon the scholars or the learned who wish to implement the correct system of understanding Islaam as it was understood by the righteous predecessors, that they should all work towards cleansing this Islaam. Cleansing it from that which entered into it and of that which it has no part. Indeed it is as free of things as the wolf was from the blood of Ya'qoob's son²⁹ as they say. Then they should call to this. Whether it be in matters of belief (*aqeedah*), laws about which there are many differences of opinion, or character or behaviour. Purification of the Religion must take place in all aspects of this Islaam that Allaah completed for us, as we mentioned previously, and which we re-emphasize with the *Hadeeth* of the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*):

²⁸ Related by al-Bukhaaree (no. 730) and Muslim (no. 3396)

²⁹ This is in reference to the story of Yoosuf (*'alayhis salaam*) in the *Qur'aan*. He was put into a well by his brothers who told his father, Ya'qoob (*'alayhis salaam*) that a wolf had devoured Yoosuf.

"I did not neglect anything by which you would draw closer to Allaah and keep far away from the Hellfire, except that I ordered you to do it. And I did not neglect anything which would keep you far away from Allaah and draw you closer to the Fire, except that I prevented you from doing it."³⁰

For those wishing to follow this correct path, something must be made clear. Many of the scholars of the past and the present are aware that a lot of things entered into the *Sunnah*, or which it has no part. This occurred even in the first century when some deviant sects started raising their voices and calling to that which contradicted the *Qur'aan* and the *Sunnah* by following their vain desires. One of the *Khawaarij*³¹ for example, after being guided by Allaah to the *Sunnah* said: 'Look carefully at where you take your Religion, for if we liked something we used to make it a *Hadeeth*.' For this reason, Ibn Sireen said:

"Pay attention to where you take your Religion from."³²

This statement has been reported as a *hadeeth* of the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*), but in fact, it is not a *hadeeth*, for the chain of narrators stops at Ibn Sireen.³³ This is also why some scholars of *Hadeeth* have said:

"*Al-Isnaad* (the chain of narrators) is an essential part of the Religion. Had it not been for the *Isnaad*, anyone would have said whatever he wished."³⁴

This is a matter about which there is consensus amongst the scholars in theory. I know fully well what I mean when I say 'in theory.' That is because I must mention a bitter truth. In practice, the scholars did not pay much attention to this *Isnaad* as they should have done. Indeed only a small group of scholars paid attention to it. Some of them were: the Imaam, Ahmad Ibn Hanbal,³⁵ the Imaam Yahyaa Ibn Ma'een,³⁶ 'Alee Ibnul-Madeenee³⁷

³⁰ Related in the *Sunan* of Imaam ash-Shaafi'ee (1/14), and by al-Bayhaquee (7/76), and by al-Khateeb in *al-Faqeeh wal-Mutafaqqih* (1/93). See shaykh Saleem al-Hilaalee's introduction to his checking on *Hidaayatus Sultaan* for a proper checking of this *hadeeth*.

³¹ *Khawaarij*: Dissenters of dissidents who broke away from the rule of the Caliph, 'Alee Ibn Abee Taalib.

³² Related in *Sharh Saheeh Muslim* (1/87) of Imaam an-Nawawee

³³ Muhammad Ibn Sireen al-Ansaaree of Basrah in 'Iraaq. He was from amongst the *taabi'een* and was known for his piety, competence and knowledge. He was strict upon related only the words of the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) instead of just their meanings. This great scholar died in the year 110H.

³⁴ Related from Ibnul-Mubaarak in *Sharaf Ashaabul-Hadeeth* (1/15) with the checking of Aboo 'Abdur-Rahmaan Mahmood

³⁵ Ahmad Ibn Muhammad Ibn Hanbal, the famous Imaam to which the Hanbalee school of law in Islaamic jurisprudence is attributed. He dies in the year 241H.

³⁶ Yahyaa Ibn Ma'een of Baghdaad was a famous Haafidh and competent scholar. He was considered to be the Imaam of the science of *Jarh wat-Ta'deel* (Character and knowledge appraisal). He died in Madeenah in the year 133H at the age of about seventy.

³⁷ 'Alee Ibnul-Madeenee of Basrah, 'Iraaq. He was another trustworthy and competent Imaam. He was considered to be the most knowledgeable person in *Hadeeth* of his day. Al-Bukhaaree said of him: "I never felt inferior in front of anyone except 'Alee Ibnul-Madeenee." His shaykh and teacher, Ibn 'Uyaynah said about

and their students such as Imaam al-Bukhaaree³⁸ and Muslim³⁹ and others from amongst the scholars of *Hadeeth*, critics and those who gave character appraisals of the narrators of *Hadeeth*. This being the case, it follows that these are the ones upon whom one must rely in order to fulfill this task of purification of the *Sunnah* - to which we must return - after cleansing.

The books of the *Sunnah* today are widely available. This is due to Allaah's complete care and concern for the Muslim community - and in keeping with this promise - He mentions in the *Qur'aan*:

"Verily, We have sent down the remembrance (*dhikr*) and surely We will preserve it."
[Sooratul-Hijr 15:9]

On this occasion I must make a point. This noble *aayah*, when it states that "*We have sent down the Dhikr and we shall surely protect it.*" Some people who do not specialize in the *Sunnah*, nor do they give it much credit are of the wrong opinion that the protection granted here encompasses the *Qur'aan* only. Let me say, yes Allaah has mentioned the *dhikr* in this *aayah*, for He has promised to preserve the words and letters of the *Qur'aan*. He has however, guarded its meanings by the *Sunnah* of His Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*).

The true accomplishment of this purification is not possible therefore, except through the scholars of *Hadeeth*. Consequently, the understanding of the *Qur'aan* cannot be established, except through this purified *Sunnah*. If not, the Muslims will fall into what those before, like the groups other than the Saved Sect, fell into. This is because the *Qur'aan* is as 'Umar Ibnul-Khattaab (*radiyallaahu 'anhu*) said:

"The *Qur'aan* can be interpreted in many different ways."

This is why Allaah stated:

"And We have sent down to you the remembrance (*dhikr*), so that you may explain to the people what has been sent down to them." [Sooratun-Nahl 16:44]

him: "I used to learn more from him than he did from me." An-Nisaa'ee said about him: "It was as though Allaah created him for *Hadeeth*." This great scholar died in the year 134H, may Allaah have mercy upon him.

³⁸ Muhammad Ibn Ismaa'eel al-Bukhaaree was born in the year 191H in Bukhaaraa, Turkistan. He traveled to Makkah when he was sixteen years of age and he stayed in the *Hijaaz* (Makkah and Madeenah) for six years before moving onto some other places in search of knowledge. This he gained without a doubt, for he memorized two hundred thousand *Hadeeths* of the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*). He also met a number of scholars, amongst them were Imaam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal and 'Alee Ibnul-Madeene. His book of authentic *Hadeeth* is well-known to all. He died in the year 256H at the age of 62, may Allaah have mercy upon him.

³⁹ Abul-Husayn Muslim Ibnul-Hajjaaj from Naysaaboer. He traveled extensively to gain knowledge and meet with a number of scholars. Among these scholars was Imaam Ahmad Ibn Hanbal. He wrote many books, the most popular of which is his *Saheeh* which is second only to *Saheehul-Bukhaaree* in authenticity. The Imaam, Muslim died in Naysaaboer, in the year 261H at the age of 57, may Allaah have mercy upon him.

We have sent down the *Dhikr* to you, O Muhammad, that you may explain to the people with your *Sunnah*, what has been sent down to them.

This verse therefore, points to there being an explainer and a thing explained. The things explained in the revealed *Qur'aan*, which is referred to as the *Dhikr* and the explainer is the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) who is spoken to in this statement.

There is no way for the *Qur'aan* to be understood except through the *Sunnah* - the authentic *Sunnah*. That is why the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) warned against two things, in order to fulfill this explanation in a true and correct manner. The first thing against which he warned his followers against is the reporting of things of him that he did not say:

"Whoever deliberately lies upon me, then surely let him occupy his seat in the Fire."
In another narration it states:

Whoever says about me something which I did not say, then surely let him occupy his seat in the Fire."⁴⁰

This is the first issue against which the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) warned his followers.

The second issue which the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) brought to the attention of his followers is that it is obligatory to refer to the *Sunnah* just as one refers to the *Qur'aan*. That is why the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) said:

"I certainly do not want to find any one of you reclining upon his couch and saying that when there comes to you a command that I gave or something which I have prohibited: 'I do not know. What we have found lawful in the Book of Allaah, we accept it as lawful and what we have found in it to be unlawful, we accept it as unlawful.'"⁴¹

By combining these two issues which the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) warned, we would be able to understand the remedy which the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) prescribed as the cure for the ills that have befallen us from all sides. This is in reference to the first point about purification.

The second point to which we refer is training (*tarbiyah*) - after the scholars have done the necessary purification - and I have already explained what I mean by this. They must accompany this purification with training their families and their dependants in

⁴⁰ Both of these narrations are reported by al-Bukhaaree (1/84) and by Aboo Daawood (3/1036).

⁴¹ Related by Ahmad (4/132) and Aboo Daawood (no. 5064) and by at-Tirmidhee (no. 3662). Shaykh Ahmad Shaakir gives a lengthy discussion upon it in his checking of *ar-Risaalah* (no. 19) by Imaam ash-Shaafi'ee.

accordance with this pure Islaam. This is also so as not to become from amongst those who do not practice what they preach. Indeed our Lord has said:

"O you who believe! Why do you say that which you do not do. Most hateful in the Sight of Allaah is that you say that which you do not do." [Sooratus-Saff 61:2-3]

For this reason we see the severe warning to those who do not work according to their knowledge. For the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) has mentioned in a *Hadeeth*:

"Give glad tidings to this *Ummah* that it would rise up and be established in the land. So whoever does a deed of the Hereafter for a worldly benefit, he has no portion in the Hereafter."⁴²

I want - at the conclusion of this speech - to explain that in the pathway to progress we must avoid the unlawful acts which you all know for certain like some of the examples we mentioned before, such as *Shirk*, murder, *Ribaa* and so on.

I would like to discuss in particular, the first disease which the Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) mentioned in the *Hadeeth* of '*eenah* trading transactions. This is because this disease is widespread in some countries and most of the people are as the Lord of the worlds says:

"They do not know..."

'*Eenah* trading is a type of transaction that involves *Ribaa* which is unlawful. There are unfortunately some people who conduct this type of business upon the presumption that it is legally permissible. '*Eenah* trading is known to the scholars and it derives its name from '*ayn* meaning an object or actual thing.

A person - Mr. B - comes to a car merchant - Mr. C - for example and inquires about then buys a car. He buys this car upon installments, *not cash*, - for, say twenty thousand dollars. Mr. B who has just purchased this car upon installments, then returns to the merchant - Mr. C - from whom he bought the car and offers to sell it for cash.

Mr. C - realizes that Mr. B does not want a car, rather he wants money. So, the two men now agree upon a cash price for the car of - let's say eighteen thousand dollars. Thus Mr. B who purchased the car for installments has just resold it for eighteen thousand dollars. Mr. B now goes away having a debt of twenty thousand dollars, when in fact he has only taken eighteen thousand dollars.

⁴² Related by al-Bayhaquee and al-Haakim said that its chain of narrators was authentic. It has been authenticated by Shaykh al-Albaanee in *Ahkaamul-Janaa'iz* (no. 52) and in *Saheehul-Jaami'* (no. 2825).

This type of transaction in the *'eenah* trading that the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) prohibited. So it is very clear to those who do not follow their vain desires or at least do not follow *'eenah* trading transactions. The true picture behind this type of transactions is that the borrower gets less than is recorded against him. There is no difference in this in which *riba* is disguised as trade and if he had gone and said: 'Lend me eighteen thousand dollars and I will give you back twenty thousand dollars. And why is this so? Because the borrower receives less cash than what he is required to repay. Then what is the difference between this and *'eenah* trading? This sale here was only used as a means of making *riba* permissible. This is exactly what the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) warned us against in some *hadeeths* which were mentioned before. That is, his (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) prohibiting us from following in the footsteps of those who went before us. He singled out the Jews specifically. For Allaah made fat unlawful for them, as the Lord of the Worlds said in the *Qur'aan*:

"Due to the wrongdoings of the Jews, we made them unlawful for them certain good things which had been previously made lawful for them." [Sooratun-Nisaa' 4:160]

We made unlawful for them some good things which had previously been made lawful for them. Amongst these good things which were made unlawful by this *Qur'aanic* injunction was fat - as was mentioned before in the *Hadeeth*:

"Allaah has cursed the Jews, for the fat (of animals) was made unlawful for them, yet they melted it. Sold it and benefited from its receipts. And indeed if Allaah makes the eating of anything unlawful for a people, he also makes unlawful the receipts from its sale."⁴³

Here we find that the Jews have played with a legal ruling - the prohibition of eating fat. Allaah is all-Knowing and all-Wise. Due to the wrongdoings of the Jews, He made fat unlawful for them. When a Jew killed a fat sheep, he would only eat the red meat and throw away the fat in keeping with the injunction of Allaah. But they did not have patience with this legal ruling. So they devised a trick to make the fat lawful. They therefore melted the fat - this is what is meant by "so they disguised it". They melted it by placing it in pots and lighting fire below it. The fat therefore, took a different shape. The *Shaytaan* (devil) whispered to the Jews and made this act seem pleasing to them, that the fat had now changed from being fat. They full well knew that it was still fat in its nature, composition and taste. Then it was merely the shape that was changed - in order to eat it - as is said in some countries. By this change however, they made lawful what Allaah had made unlawful. The Messenger of Allaah (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) did not relate to us this story of the Jews' making the fat lawful by this trick, nor did Allaah relate to us the story of the Jews and their trickery in catching fish on Saturday by trapping them in the bay as has been mentioned in some exegesis of the *Qur'aan* - Allaah and his Messenger (*sallallaahu 'alayhi*

⁴³ Related by al-Bukhaaree, Muslim and Aboo Daawood. It was authenticated by Shaykh al-Albaanee in *Saheehul-Jaami'* (no. 5107)

wa sallam) did not relate to us these stories as mere events in History, but indeed they related it for the very reason that is mentioned by Allaah in the *Qur'aan*:

"Indeed in their stories there is a lesson for men of understanding." [Soorah Yoosuf 12:166]

The lesson therefore, in these two stories - the story of the Jews and the fish and that of the Jews with the fat - is that we should not fall into what they fall into by devising tricks to get around what Allaah has prohibited. '*Eenah* transactions therefore, were made unlawful by the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) so that the Muslims do not fall into devising tricks to get around the unlawfulness of *riba* - the picture of which is to take a loan of less than you are required to repay - by disguising it openly behind the guise of sale as the Jews disguised the fat when they changed its shape.

When I say these things however, I am aware that there are many scholars who have agreed that '*eenah* trading transactions are unlawful. There are others too, who because they may not have heard the *Hadeeth*, or they do not think that it is an authentic *Hadeeth* - because the science of *Hadeeth* is not their field of specialization - they say this type of trading is permissible due to the use of the term 'trade' in these transactions. The people of knowledge, however know that the mere presence of the word 'trade' in this transaction does not make it trade, except that it is not unlawful legally.

If we go back to the *Hadeeth*, we see that the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) mentioned '*eenah* trading as the first of a number of illnesses which would befall the Muslims. Amongst these illnesses are: the love of the worldly things and the abandonment of *Jihaad* in the cause of Allaah. We must therefore learn from this *Hadeeth*, and not fall into that against which we were warned, nor into those diseases which the Prophet (*sallallaahu 'alayhi wa sallam*) mentioned. That is, if we want to return to the position that our Lord wants for us. As He says:

"But honour belongs to Allaah, His Messenger (Muhammad) and to the Believers." [Sooratul-Munaafiqoon 63:8]

This is what I want to say in answer to these questions...

We ask Allaah to allow us and you all to understand Islaam properly - in the light of the *Qur'aan* and the *Sunnah* and the understanding of the *Salaf*. And we ask Him to grant us all - both the rulers and the ruled - the success of working by this Islaam.

I ask Allaah, for He is al-Ahad (the One), as-Samad (the Self-Sufficient). He who begets not, nor was begotten and there is none comparable to him - to accept our supplication and to give us victory over our enemies. Verily He is the all-Hearing, the One Able to Answer. And all praise is due to Allaah.